

GRASSINGTON DEVONSHIRE INSTITUTE
(A Charitable Incorporated Organisation – Registered Charity no. 1185815)

TRUSTEES

NOTES OF A MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 13TH JANUARY 2020

Present: David Wood (in the Chair)
Penny Clover (also Treasurer)
Andrew Jackson Dave Tierney

Apologies: Hanne Barton (holiday), Mandy Clover (illness), Marion Field (illness) and Jean Slater (holiday). These were noted and accepted by those present.

Mr Wood welcomed colleagues to the inaugural meeting of the GDI as a CIO.

1. Notes of previous meeting

The notes of the meeting held on Monday 11th November 2019 and the ‘extra-ordinary’ meeting held on 2nd December 2019 were approved as a correct record.

2. Action Sheet

3. Matters arising

i) Interior redecoration

The flooring and re-decoration scheme and other improvements for both ladies and gentlemen’s toilets had been completed on schedule and the re-decoration scheme for the Moor Lane access to the Octagon had been completed as planned. Mr Wood thanked those colleagues involved in planning and arranging for these significant improvements to be carried out at such a busy time of year for the Town Hall.

It was noted that Mr Doyle, supported by other volunteers had now shelved the stock room and installed a freezer for general use. In addition, a new hand rail was in the process of being installed on the Moor Lane corridor which would provide additional support for those visitors who had mobility problems. Such ad hoc improvements would require some funding support and a sum of £500 was approved to be made available to the volunteer team beyond which expenditure the full Trustee group would need to be involved. Receipts for expenditure would, of course, be required.

Action – Mr Wood to confirm the ‘working budget for ad hoc maintenance’ to the relevant parties.

4. Report on the Dickensian Christmas Market 2019

Miss Clover reported that the Town Hall’s net profit, after taking into account the new decorations and banners, amounted to £14,675, which was a similar amount to 2018. Over 5,800 adults had visited the Town Hall over the four days, although the two Saturdays had been particularly busy given the number of coaches visiting the village. It was felt that more coaches (and hence people) could be accommodated on the two Sundays and it was agreed to that a note would be sent to the Dickensian Festival Committee (DFC) to seek their views. It was also agreed that the donation to the DFC would be £1,467, in accordance with the agreement reached in 2018. The volunteer contribution to making the indoor Christmas Market such a success had been fantastic once again and Mr Wood thanked Miss M Clover and Ms P Clover for co-ordinating the event on behalf of Trustees. Their intention to step away from this role, whilst remaining as volunteers, will require consideration and careful planning later in the year.

Action – Mr Wood to write to the Dickensian Festival Committee to seek their views on encouraging more coaches to visit on the two Sundays and to confirm the donation amount to the Festival.

5. Main Stage Gantry

Given the comments made by Watts Group in their building Condition Survey report in July 2019, Spot On Theatre Services had been asked to comment on the alternative arrangements which could be made to continue to utilise the facilities to lift and lower back drops and scenery etc on to the stage. In November, a Structural Engineer had examined the gantry and a report had been produced, at the Trustees' expense, indicating that the gantry was currently unsafe and did not meet current regulations or health and safety standards. As a result, the gantry had remained out of bounds since September 2019.

The two reports had been forwarded, as requested, to Grassington Parish Council (GPC) for consideration and the Chair, Mr Charlton, had confirmed by email that a resolution to the gantry problem needed to be found and funded by the Trustees.

Dr Jackson, along with key individuals from around the community, agreed to meet, taking into account the professional advice already received and available, to establish a short term workaround, to enable the pantomime to take place as planned in late February. Beyond this, a longer-term solution would need to be drawn up and presented with costs for consideration by Trustees. Any potential external sources of funding, for a 'stage re-design and improvement scheme', would need to be researched.

Action – Dr Jackson to arrange the required meeting and investigate potential funding sources.

6. Lease arrangements

An informal meeting had been held on 16th December between the Chairs and Deputy Chairs of the GDI and GPC to try to clarify the positions of the respective organisations and to try to make progress towards agreeing a lease for the Town Hall. Trustees were reminded that the GDI's offer of £20k (to commence an external repair fund) and £8k in respect of a proposed formula for back rent had not proved acceptable to GPC, which needed a guaranteed rent figure to enable future planning. Given the limited attendance at the meeting, it was agreed that fuller, more inclusive consideration of the issue should take place when all Trustees were present, although there was some initial support for a guaranteed sum to be offered.

Action – All Trustees to consider the issues, based on the informal note of the meeting and previous correspondence.

7. Membership

Some ideas had previously been circulated which could form the basis of a membership offering, which would be essential under the terms of the new CIO. It was agreed that all existing members of the GDI (under the old arrangements) needed to be identified and contacted with a view to establishing their interest in becoming a member of the CIO.

Action – Dr Jackson to work with Mrs Slater to identify existing members and start to create a new membership list and membership benefits for consideration by the Trustees.

8. Snooker Room

It was noted that one of the Snooker players had paid for the table to be re-covered at his own expense. Whilst the individual concerned did not wish to receive any publicity, a letter of thanks would be drawn up and forwarded to him in due course. In return for this excellent gesture, a table iron and new table cover had been purchased which would be paid for by Town Hall funds.

Action – Mr Wood to prepare and send a letter of thanks for this generous donation.

9. Remuneration

It had become 'traditional' to pay a small, one off, 'Christmas Bonus' to both Caretakers and the Treasurer reported that this had not happened this year due to the change of personnel. Those present felt that the tradition should be continued with the full time Caretaker receiving £125 and the part time Caretaker receiving £30.

Action - The Treasurer agreed to make arrangements for payment.

10. Prize Draw

The winner of the December prize draw was confirmed as 'Rob and Kath Gower'. They had been informed and a cheque had been issued. The winner of the January prize draw was P. Jaques.

11. Finance Report

The Treasurer reported that the year had ended with what looked like a small overall loss (to be confirmed once the annual accounts are prepared). However, the finances for 2019 included the significant expense of internal improvement schemes and the purchase of new Christmas decorations, banners and equipment. Trustees noted the structural engineer's report had been invoiced at £650. Outstanding debts now amounted to just £39 following action to chase up outstanding bills in December and January. A generous donation of £1,000 had been received from the Wharfedale Beer Festival and a note of thanks had been sent.

The new CIO's current account would be held by Santander (transfer arrangements due to be completed on 14th January) whilst the lottery (Prize Draw) account would remain with Barclays. Savings accounts would be reviewed and old signatories deleted whilst new ones would be added as soon as possible.

Trustees were asked to consider appropriate, alternative arrangements for examining the GDI's accounts for 2019, if the existing 'auditor' was unable to fulfil the role.

12. Any other business

i) Booking systems - Work continued with Grassington Hub, to develop an online booking system and service run by the Hub. A new Skedda-based system had been established and it was anticipated that there would be no need to rely on a diary once the system was fully up and running. All booking enquiries and details thereof would be taken by the Hub and all bookings would need to be authorised by a GDI Trustee before confirmation could be issued. Payment for the Hub-s contribution would be discussed and agreed in due course. The Caretaker would be able to obtain real time updates of bookings which would enable him to make the necessary arrangements in and around the Town Hall. To facilitate this, a budget of £150 was agreed to purchase a tablet to connect to the Skedda system.

ii) Calendar Girls Production - Dr Jackson asked if the arch around the stage in the main hall could be painted with sunflowers, temporarily, during the production of Calendar Girls in May 2020. This was supported.

13. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting of Trustees will take place **on Monday 10th February 2020, at 7pm in the Games Room**. The two meetings thereafter will take place as follows:-

Monday 9th March at 7pm

Monday 20th April AGM at 6.30pm followed by normal meeting

The meeting closed at 8.45pm.